

This manuscript proposes a phenomenological approach to understanding the experiences of self-objectification with college age biracial females on predominantly white university campuses. The purpose of this literature review is to provide rationale and inform a future research study with this specific population of biracial (black/white) females. Additionally, the information provided in this review may be used to implement culturally sensitive mental health treatment for biracial females seeking therapy.

Among the factors influencing biracial identity development found in the literature is physical appearance. (Buckley & Carter, 2004; Roberts-Clarke, Roberts & Morokoff, 2004; Rockquemore & Brunσμα, 2004; Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2005). With regard to physical appearance, one of the elements for determining the definition of beauty for women are female's perceptions of male physical preferences. Male emphasis on the physical features of females in the selection of an ideal mate is based on the theory of evolutionary mate selection (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Within the evolutionary mate selection theory, mate selection is concerned with seeking potential partners with which to copulate.

Other elements for the determination of beauty are the perceptions women believe of their own attractiveness. A woman's view of self-regarding her physical features and attractiveness may influence on how she perceives her "value" within the dating "marketplace" based on a social exchange theoretical perspective (Regan, 2008). The social exchange theory is compared to entering a marketplace in which people exchange their own assets (for example: beauty or wealth) for desirable attributes in an ideal partner. In summary, a biracial woman who holds an unrealistic or inflated view of self may have a distortion of perception regarding self-worth in this marketplace.

Frederickson and Roberts (1997), propose a feminist theory of self-objectification providing a framework for understanding psychological experiences unique to females. The theory posits women who experience self-objectification often monitor the outward appearance of their bodies. Mental health issues may result from women who experience objectification.

Racial identity development contributes to molding an individual's perception of themselves, of people within both their own racial minority and racial majority groups, and of people in other racial groups. (Poston, 1990). In an attempt to understand Biracial identity development, researchers have proposed various identity models, with the most recent called the variant approach (Shih & Sanchez, 2005).

A common theme to the variant models is an ecological human developmental perspective. (Shih & Sanchez, 2005; Steinberg & Morris, 2001). Developmental models include Poston's 1990; five phases of change which demonstrates the complexity biracial individuals are challenged with as they define themselves and worldviews.

The Continuum of Biracial Identity (COBI) model is a biracial identity model posited by Roquemore and Laszloffy (2005). The COBI model is a continuum of racial identification which reflects how the individual identifies racially and is not based on biological race composition.

Overall, the information in this review adds to the literature as a resource for therapists and a guide toward future research in filling the current gap within feminist and biracial identity development literature.